

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A PROPOSED AMENDMENT
TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL
COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY
THERAPISTS CHAPTER 135-5, REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE, RULE
135-5-.05, ASSOCIATE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS, AND,
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the authority set forth below, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter "Board") proposes an amendment to the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, Chapter 135-5 Requirements for Licensure, Rule 135-5-.05 Associate Marriage and Family Therapists (hereinafter "proposed rule amendment").

This notice, together with an exact copy of the proposed rule amendment and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment, is being mailed to all persons who have requested, in writing, that they be placed on a mailing list. A copy of this notice, an exact copy of the proposed rule amendment, and a synopsis of the proposed rule amendment may be reviewed during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except official State holidays, at the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. These documents will also be available for review on the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists office website at www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/counselors or by contacting the Board office at 478-207-2440.

A public hearing is scheduled to begin at **10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 13, 2012**, in the Office of the Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217 to provide the public an opportunity to comment upon and provide input into the proposed rule amendment.

At the public hearing anyone may present data, make a statement, comment or offer a viewpoint or argument whether orally or in writing. Lengthy statements or statements of a considerable technical or economic nature, as well as previously recorded messages, must be submitted for the official record. Oral statements should be concise and will be limited to five (5) minutes per person. Written comments are welcomed. Such written comments must be legible and signed, should contain contact information from the maker (address, telephone number and/or facsimile number, etc.) and be actually received in the office prior to the close of business (5:00 p.m. EDT) on **Friday, July 6, 2012**. Written comments should be addressed to Randall D. Vaughn, Division Director, Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217. Fax (866) 888-7127.

The Board will consider the proposed rule amendment for adoption at its meeting scheduled to begin at **10:05 a.m., Friday July 13, 2012** at the Georgia Secretary of State, Professional Licensing Boards Division, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia 31217.

According to the Department of Law, State of Georgia, the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists has the authority to adopt proposed rule amendments 135-5-.05 pursuant to authority contained in O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5 and 43-10A-13.

At its meeting Friday, May 11, 2012, the Board voted that the formulation and adoption of this rule does not impose excessive regulatory cost on any licensee and any cost to comply with the proposed rule cannot be reduced by a less expensive alternative that fully accomplishes the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5 and 43-10A-13.

Additionally, at its meeting Friday, May 11, 2012, the Board voted that it is not legal or feasible to meet the objectives of O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5 and 43-10A-13 to adopt or implement differing actions for businesses as listed in O.C.G.A. § 50-13-4(3)(A), (B), (C), and (D). The formulation and adoption of these rules will impact every licensee in the same manner and each licensee is independently licensed in the field of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.

For further information, contact the Board office at (478) 207-2440.

This notice is given in compliance with Section 4(a)(1) of the Georgia Administrative Procedures Act (O.C.G.A. §50-13-4).

This 31st day of May, 2012.

Lisa W. Durden
Director
Professional Licensing Boards

Posted: May 31, 2012

**SYNOPSIS OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS RULE FOR CHAPTER 135-5,
REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE, RULE 135-5-.05, ASSOCIATE
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**

Purpose: The purpose of this rule is to correct rule language with regard to directed work experience and supervision requirements.

Main Features: The rule change clarifies language regarding engaging in the practice of marriage and family therapy while under direction and supervision, removing the language “under direct supervision”.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EXISTING RULE AND THE PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS TO THE GEORGIA COMPOSITE BOARD OF
PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND MARRIAGE AND
FAMILY THERAPISTS RULE FOR CHAPTER 135-5, REQUIREMENTS FOR
LICENSURE, RULE 135-5-.05, ASSOCIATE MARRIAGE AND FAMILY
THERAPISTS**

Note: underlined text is proposed to be added; lined-through text is proposed to be deleted.

135-5-.05 Associate Marriage and Family Therapists. Amended.

(1) Definitions:

(a) Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor means a person who is licensed as a marriage and family therapist and who has been approved by the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers and Marriage and Family Therapists to provide supervision of the practice of marriage and family therapy. To obtain such approval the person shall submit documentation of the following: five years of full-time post-licensure experience in the practice of marriage and family therapy; 180 hours of experience providing marriage and family therapy supervision for at least two supervisees during a period of no less than two years and no more than five years; 36 hours of supervision received from an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor or a Georgia Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, specifically in the skill of providing marriage and family therapy supervision, a minimum of 24 hours of which shall have been individual supervision-of-supervision and a recommendation from each of the supervisors who provided supervision-of supervision attesting to the applicant’s competence as a supervisor. In addition, the Board may, at its discretion, accept a supervisor who is licensed as a Marriage and Family Therapist in another jurisdiction and who has been designated an Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor by the Board that licenses Marriage and Family Therapists in that jurisdiction.

(b) Contract for Post-Graduate Experience and Supervision means a statement, on forms provided by the Board, made by a person who has completed one of the degree programs required for licensure as either an associate marriage and family therapist or a marriage and family therapist, specifying that person’s plan for obtaining the remaining experience and supervision required for licensure as a marriage and family therapist. Such a statement, once reviewed and approved by the Board, shall be considered a registered

contract. A registered contract may be amended, so long as any changes have been approved by the Board.

(c) Course in Human Development means a graduate level course in any aspect of human development across the life span, including but not limited to theories of individual development, theories of learning, theories of personality, theories of normal and abnormal behavior, gender, human sexuality and psychopathology.

(d) Course in Marriage and Family Studies means a graduate level course in the principles, concepts or history of marriage and family life, family systems, family relations and family development.

(e) Course in Marriage and Family Therapy means a graduate level course in the theory and practice of various treatment modalities in marriage and family therapy.

(f) Course in Marriage and Family Therapy Ethics means a graduate level course in professional ethics, legal responsibilities and liabilities, standards of practice, licensure regulation, and professional socialization relevant to the practice of marriage and family therapy.

(g) Course in Research means a graduate level course in research design, methods and statistics.

(h) Direct Clinical Experience means time spent in client contact as therapist or cotherapist, in supervision, in case staffing, or in case consultation.

(i) Direction means ongoing oversight by an employer or superior of the work of a person practicing professional counseling, social work, or marriage and family therapy. The director shall be responsible for assuring the quality of services rendered by that practitioner, and shall ensure that qualified supervision or intervention occurs in situations which require expertise beyond that of the practitioner. In order to be acceptable to the Marriage and Family Therapy Standards Committee of the Board, a director must attest to having performed the functions specified in this paragraph, and when not an employer must have entered into a contractual agreement with the practitioner to perform these functions.

(j) One Year Practicum means twelve months of supervised experience obtained while enrolled in graduate level courses designated as a practicum at an educational institution which, at the time, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

(k) Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy means evaluating and treating emotional and mental problems and conditions, whether cognitive, affective or behavioral, resolving intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, and changing perception, attitudes and behavior; all within the context of marital and family systems. Marriage and family therapy includes, without being limited to, individual, group, couple, sexual, family and divorce therapy. Marriage and family therapy involves an applied understanding of the dynamics of marital and family therapy systems, including individual psychodynamics, the use of assessment instruments that evaluate marital and family functioning, designing and recommending a course of treatment, and the use of psychotherapy and counseling.

(l) Program Equivalent to a Marriage and Family Therapy Degree Program means an organized course of study at an accredited educational institution consisting of a master's degree and additional post-master's degree coursework which includes three courses in marriage and family studies, three courses in marriage and family therapy, three courses in human development, one course in marriage and family therapy ethics, and one course in research.

(m) Program in Marriage and Family Therapy means a master's degree program at an accredited educational institution which includes three courses in marriage and family

studies, three courses in marriage and family therapy, three courses in human development, one course in marriage and family therapy ethics, and one course in research.

(n) Supervision means the direct clinical review, for the purpose of training or teaching, by a supervisor of the interactions with clients of a person practicing professional counseling, social work or marriage and family therapy. Supervision may include, without being limited to, the review of case presentations, audio tapes, video tapes, and direct observation in order to promote the development of the practitioner's clinical skills. Both supervisors and supervisees are required to maintain a contemporaneous record of the date, duration, type (individual, paired, or group), and a brief summary of the pertinent activity for each supervision session to be submitted to the Board upon request. If there are any discrepancies in hours, contemporaneous documentation of supervision will be requested.

(2) Requirements for Licensure:

(a) Education. The applicant must have earned a master's degree from a program in marriage and family therapy, from a program equivalent to a marriage and family therapy degree program, or from any program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education. Such program shall be in an educational institution which, at the time the degree was awarded, was accredited by a regional body recognized by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

(b) Practicum. The applicant must have completed a one year practicum in the practice of marriage and family therapy before or after the granting of the master's degree.

1. Such practicum shall include a minimum of 500 hours of direct clinical experience.
2. Such practicum shall include 100 hours of supervision provided by a licensed marriage and family therapist, professional counselor, clinical social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist, who was also an American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy Approved Supervisor, a Georgia Board Approved Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, or a person who was receiving supervision-of-supervision in order to qualify for either designation.

(c) Contract. The applicant must register an acceptable contract for post-graduate experience and supervision with the Board.

1. Applicants who have not yet secured employment or begun supervision at the time of their application for licensure may indicate on the contract form that their plan for obtaining experience or supervision is not complete, provided that they submit a completed contract to the Board upon securing employment or beginning supervision.
2. Once registered, any proposed change in the contract must be submitted to the Board for approval.
3. The Board, at its discretion, may request an update of the contract.

(3) Restrictions on Practice:

(a) A person who holds a license as an associate marriage and family therapist may only use the title "associate marriage and family therapist."

(b) A person who holds a license as an associate marriage and family therapist may engage in the practice of marriage and family therapy, but only while under direct direction and supervision, and only for a period not to exceed five years while obtaining the post-master's experience and supervision required for licensure as a marriage and family therapist.

Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 43-1-25, 43-10A-3, 43-10A-5 and 43-10A-13